

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PA-02 H-02
SSM-05 SIG-03 SS-15 INR-10 SSO-00 INRE-00 PM-05
/089 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND

S/PRS - MR. CARTER

H - MR. FLATEN

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER

NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

-----063513 110131Z /62

O 110023Z MAR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION SINAI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR
DOD
JCS
CIA
USIA
NSC

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 10

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 10, 1978. FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS THOMAS RESTON.

Q. AT THIS POINT DO YOU KNOW WHO WILL BE AT THE UNCLASSIFIED

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AIRPORT TO GREET MR. BEGIN, IF ANYBODY, MONDAY AFTERNOON?

A. NO, I DON'T. I SUGGEST YOU ASK THE WHITE HOUSE SINCE THIS IS A STATE VISIT.

Q. WHEN IS ATHERTON COMING?

A. I THINK HE IS ARRIVING HERE AT DULLES SHORTLY BEFORE 3:00 P.M. TODAY. JUST A MINUTE, LET ME CHECK. YES, DULLES, SHORTLY BEFORE 3:00 P.M. TODAY. WE DO NOT EXPECT THAT HE WILL MAKE ANY STATEMENT OR BE AVAILABLE FOR QUESTIONS.

Q. AMBASSADOR WEST, FORMER GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA, HAS BEEN UP TO THE HILL AND TALKING TO VARIOUS AIDES ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST ARMS. THERE ARE VARIOUS ACCOUNTS OF WHAT HE HAS BEEN SAYING. BUT LET ME ASK YOU,

REPRESENTING THE STATE DEPARTMENT: IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT THREATENING CONGRESS THAT IF IT VETOED THE ARAB ARMS SALES, THEY WOULD BE OPENING THE DOOR TO INCREASED OIL PRICES?

A. THE STATE DEPARTMENT NEVER THREATENS THE CONGRESS. BUT I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS WHO ARE THREATENING ANYTHING ON THE HILL -- BUT IF YOU WOULD LIKE ME TO ASK WHETHER THIS IS A SUBJECT OF OFFICIAL CONCERN HERE, I WILL BE GLAD TO DO SO.

Q. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT PERCEIVE THE PROPOSED SALE OF ARMS TO SAUDI ARABIA AS LINKED IN THE SAUDI ARABIAN PERCEPTION TO THE OIL QUESTION?

A. I WILL TAKE THE QUESTION.

Q. ON THE MIDDLE EAST -- DR. BRZEZINSKI HAS TOLD THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PRESS THAT HE WAS, IN HIS WORDS, "STOMPED ON" DURING A MEETING WITH THE AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS; AND I WAS WONDERING IF IN THIS SPIRIT OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION CANDOR, WHETHER OR NOT SECRETARY VANCE FEELS THAT HE HAS EVER BEEN "STOMPED ON" BY AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS.

A. NO, I DON'T THINK I WOULD CHARACTERIZE ANY OF SECRETARY VANCE'S VIEWS ABOUT HIS MEETINGS WITH THE AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS IN THAT WAY. NO.

Q. HE HAS NEVER SAID, "I HAVE BEEN STOMPED ON," HAS HE?

A. I HAVE NEVER HEARD HIM SAY THAT.

Q. IS THE UNITED STATES INTERESTED IN TRYING TO ARRANGE ANOTHER MEETING BETWEEN MR. BEGIN AND PRESIDENT SADAT?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FOR YOU ON THAT.

Q. I DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT KIND OF ANSWER. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT -- VARYING REPORTS -- REPORTS THAT BEGIN IS INTERESTED IN SUCH A MEETING, THAT HE WILL ASK THE UNITED STATES TO ARRANGE SUCH A MEETING. BUT I DON'T WANT TO APPROACH IT FROM THAT VIEW POINT. I WANT TO APPROACH IT FROM A U.S. VIEWPOINT. DOES THE UNITED STATES THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA FOR BEGIN AND

SADAT TO MEET AGAIN SOON? I CAN'T SEE WHY YOU CAN'T DEAL WITH THAT, OR AT LEAST TRY TO FIND AN ANSWER.

A. I WOULD BE HAPPY TO TRY TO FIND AN ANSWER, BUT I UNCLASSIFIED

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AM BACK TO THIS OLD DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE AGAIN, WHICH
IS THE UNITED STATES WANTS TO DO WHATEVER POSSIBLE AND
WHATEVER IS APPROPRIATE TO MOVE THIS PROCESS ALONG.

IF, AS A RESULT OF THE MEETINGS BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER
AND PRIME MINISTER BEGIN, IT SEEMS THAT SUCH A MEETING
WOULD BE USEFUL OR APPROPRIATE OR WE COULD PLAY SOME
USEFUL OR APPROPRIATE ROLE IN ARRANGING IT, THEN AT
THAT POINT I THINK WE MIGHT GO AHEAD. BUT I CAN'T
SPECULATE ON WHETHER WE WILL DO THAT OR NOT.

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